

Message Text

SECRET

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43

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-10 ISO-00 PM-03 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15

RSC-01 L-02 PRS-01 CIAE-00 INR-05 NSAE-00 DODE-00

SAM-01 SAB-01 /069 W

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R 201025Z DEC 74

FM USINT BAGHDAD

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1485

INFO AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY RABAT

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

S E C R E T BAGHDAD 0897

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: MOPS, PFOR, IZ, IR

SUBJECT: IRAQI-IRANIAN TENSION

REF: BAGHDAD 890 (NOTAL)

1. IRAQI ATTENTION CONTINUES TO FOCUS ON CONFLICT WITH IRAN. PRESIDENT AL-BAKR HAS SENT MESSAGE WITH MINISTER OF STATE HISHAM ASH-SHAWI TO KING HASSAN AS RECENT HEAD OF ARAB SUMMIT AND BOUMEDIENNE AS HEAD OF NON-ALIGNED. GOI MESSAGE ALSO CONVEYED TO SEC GEN OF ARAB LEAGUE AND ALL DIPLOMATIC MISSIONS (REFTEL). PAPERS FILLED WITH SECRET

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MESSAGES FROM POPULAR ORGANIZATIONS CONDEMNING IRANIAN

DOWNING OF TWO A/C AND PLEDGING LOYALTY.

2. DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN'S DENIAL OF U.S. HAWK MISSILES IN IRAN (STATE 276313) CONVEYED IN WRITING TO MFA ON DEC 19. NO OFFICIAL REACTION BUT SEMI-OFFICIAL BAGHDAD OBSERVER DEC 20 CALLS U.S. STATEMENT "FABRICATION" AND SAYS U.S.-IRANIAN "AGGRESSION" IS "NATURAL RESULT OF IMPERIAL-IST'S DISMAY AT PROGRESSIVE ROLE BEING PLAYED BY IRAQ IN ARAB GULF AND REGION". EDITORIAL CONCLUDED THAT IRAQ'S ATTEMPT TO ESTABLISH NORMAL RELATIONS WITH IRAN IS PREVENTED BY "ROLE ASSIGNED TO IRAN BY WASHINGTON, TEL AIV, AND WORLD IMPERIALISM".

3. ACCORDING TO BRITISH AMBASSADOR GRAHAM, PLANES SHOT DOWN WERE TU-16 BADGER BOMBERS AND IRAN RECOVERED ONE CREW OF SIX, ALTHOUGH NOT CLEAR WHETHER THEY DEAD OR ALIVE. ALSO NOT CERTAIN WHETHER A/C WERE OVER IRAQI TERRITORY OR NOT. THERE IS ALSO APPARENTLY GOOD POSSIBILITY THAT MISSILES WERE BRITISH RAPIERS. U/S OF MFA HADITHI IN BRIEFING OF NON-ARAB AMBASSADORS REFUTED IRANIAN ALLEGATION THAT A/C IN IRANINIA AIRSPACE BUT SAID EVEN IF THEY WERE, IRANIAN GOOD INTENTIONS SHOULD HAVE PREVAILED. TO ARAB AMBAS-SADORS HADITHI STRESSED ARAB STAKE IN IRAQ'S CONFLICT WITH IRAN.

4. COMMENT: EXTENSIVE AND DIRECT IRANIAN INTERVENTION IN KURDISH WAR IS NOW ACCEPTED BY VIRTUALLY ALL OBSERVERS IN BAGHDAD. IT REMAINS TO BE SEEN IF MASSIVE IRAQI DOMESTIC AND FOREIGN PROPAGANDA CAMPAIGN IS TO COVER UP CHAGRIN OVER DOWNING OF TWO PLANES OR IS PRELUDE TO ARMED RIPOSTE. IN ANY CASE, ODDS ON MORE SERIOUS INCIDENTS IN FUTURE HAVE CERTAINLY INCREASED.

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